

# The Presbyterian of the South

Vol. 96. No. 24.

RICHMOND, VA.

June 14, 1922.

**P**REACHERS according to a layman writing in the Nashville Christian-Advocate are the indispensable men of the Church. We wonder if that is generally recognized as a fact. This layman says of the preacher: "He alone is indispensable. We can dispense with tall steeples, art-glass windows, elaborate decorations, carpeted aisles, and paid choirs, and still, if we have a preacher, we can have a church. Indeed, we can dispense with the church edifice, and if we have a preacher, we can have a church in a public hall, schoolhouse, parlor or kitchen. We can do without everything else, but we cannot do without the preacher. The minister is the one and only indispensable factor in the organized church." This is not the opinion of some stuck-up, conceited preacher. There are few pastors who would dare to say such things. These statements are made by a clear-headed layman, who has the welfare of the Church at heart. It would be a great blessing, if all the members of the churches had this same opinion of their preachers. They would appreciate their work more, they would be willing to support them more loyally and aid them more faithfully. With all of the defects and shortcomings of preachers, it should never be forgotten that they are called of God to be leaders of His people. Think what would be the condition of the world, if all of the preachers should be taken to heaven and their places left permanently vacant in the Church and in the world. The business concern which has one man that it recognizes as indispensable to the success and the life of its business, will support that man loyally in his plans and work, and will provide for him everything that is needed for his comfort or that will enable him to do his work better. Let the Church learn this lesson and its efficiency, under the leadership of the "indispensable man," will be multiplied many times.

**H**ISTORICAL errors are easily made and more easily perpetuated. We regret to find that we are responsible for making a mistake of this kind in our issue of May 17th, in an article on "The Beginning of Presbyterianism in America." In this article we stated that the grave of Rev. Francis Makemie was discovered by Rev. Dr. McCook, of Philadelphia. The fact is that it was discovered by Rev. Dr. L. P. Bowen, one of our own beloved ministers, now 86 years old, living at Berlin, Md. Dr. McCook took a leading part in erecting a monument over this grave.

**R**EADERS and advertisers may well notice and consider what the Religious Press Department of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World says about the Religious Press: "The Religious Press is different, and well may civilization say 'thank God' for the Religious Press. Whatever its faith, whatever its denomination, whether interdenominational or undenominational, the Religious

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**F**AYETTEVILLE Presbytery had an unusual attendance record at its recent meeting. It reports 51 ministers, 10 of whom are reported as foreign missions or infirm. There were 37 present at the meeting. But the record, so far as we know was made in the attendance of elders. There were 80 of them present, representing 80 of the 116 churches. Certainly the preachers could not have "put anything over" on the elders that time. Would that more Presbyteries could show such a preponderance of elders.

**S**PEAKING of the Northern General Assembly, the Philadelphia Presbyterian says: The Assembly has become so large that the important and imperative questions which come before it cannot be discussed by the commissioners from the floor. Everything is rushed through from the platform. The moderator gets nervous because of the expense of each moment and the necessity of getting through. We have seen able men attempting to discuss most important questions from the floor and the moderator standing with gavel in his hand ready to call him down lest he should speak beyond a few minutes. Both men were so disturbed that nothing could be accomplished. The result is that able and worthy men will not enter the farce of discussion from the floor. This leaves everything to the platform, to be driven through with a rush, like a wedge through a rail. This encourages wire-pulling behind the scenes. Substantial men weary of the farce, and are glad of some diversion to relieve the situation. The Assembly should send down an overture to the Presbyteries, and the Presbyteries should reduce the Assembly to the size of a real court, or else they may expect the public to get the impression that it is simply a big, social junket carried out at the expense of the Church.

**H**EALTH conditions have long been supposed to be far better in the country than in the city. We have heard a great deal about the strong, healthy children of the country and the weak, sickly children of the city. A careful study of this subject by scientific men and women shows that this opinion is not well founded. They state the children of the city are far more healthy and free from physical defects than their country cousins. Many of the diseases which are common to both city and country are found to be more prevalent and more serious in the country than in the city. This is, no doubt, due to the fact that the subject of health has been given far more consideration and study in the city than in the country. Through the united effort of the city government much is done to improve hygienic

conditions. This is usually lacking in the country. Much can be done there by united effort, but it must be done chiefly by the individual family. Every parent should make a careful study of conditions in the family, in the home and in the surrounding. The most expert help that can be gotten should be secured to study these conditions and to find remedies where they are needed. The most precious possession parents have are the children God has given them. They should be cared for at any cost of labor and sacrifice, that they may grow up with health of body, as well as of mind and soul, in order that they may be best fitted for the service of God in the service of the fellow-men.

**C**RITICISM of the churches is very common; but, strange to say, it seems that most of the adverse criticisms come from within the churches, and not from without. Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, the editor of the Christian Herald, in the current number of that paper, has an editorial in which he urges all the churches to "get together," though he does not explain just how that is to be done. He speaks of "the petty quarrels and jealousies of the different sects." He asks this question: "Of what value are all these dissensions among the different denominations that are going on all over the land?" And again he says, "The churches of this land are being torn and wounded by their own members in pulpit and pew; and unless there is a getting together on the real fundamentals of man's need of a Redeemer, and the giving of one for the salvation of the world, a heart stab will be dealt the Church, which Jesus loved, from which it will take long years to recover." This is certainly a deplorable condition of affairs which Dr. Sheldon describes. His description of affairs is enough to make every one who is a child of God and a lover of Christ, despair for the future of the Church. But is this a fair picture of the Church? Is it true that there are "petty quarrels and jealousies" and "dissensions" in the Church, as represented by its various branches? Our observation is that very few people outside of the churches ever honestly make any such charges against the Church. And the reason is not hard to find. There never was a time in all the history of the Christian Church, when there were as few quarrels and jealousies and dissensions as present. One thing alone will convince a candid thinker that this is true. There never was a time when there were as many movements on foot to unite the various denominations. The points on which they agree are being emphasized, while little emphasis is being placed upon their differences. If there were so many "quarrels and jealousies and dissensions," it is hard to see how they could be so anxious to "get together" into closer relations, as so many of them are trying to do. If a few writers in religious papers and a few public speakers, who claim to have the welfare of the Church so much at heart, will stop writing and speaking on this subject, "petty quarrels and jealousies and dissensions" will soon be heard of no more. The devil has found that he cannot longer use those outside of the Church to criticize it effectively, so he is now using as his agents of destruction those within the Church.